Students Return to More Technology in Classrooms

Department of Education

News Releases

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Nova Scotia students have more access than ever to information technology as they head back to class this month. All schools across the province are now connected to each other and to the world through the Internet.

The milestone is thanks to the Information Economy Initiative, a $73.4-million provincial and federal government project. The initiative has invested $38.2 million in 6,200 computers, Internet access and software for 181 junior and senior high schools. Installation of the final pieces of equipment was completed in June 2000.

"The Information Economy Initiative is making a big difference for students in classrooms across the province," said Education Minister Jane Purves. "Not only do the students have great computer equipment, but they have teachers who are trained to use them and technicians who are there to support them."

Announced in May 1998, the Information Economy Initiative is the single largest public investment in information technology in the province's history. The initiative is providing Internet connections, hardware, software, technical support and professional development. Schools, research and development institutions and communities throughout the province will benefit, putting technology at the fingertips of all Nova Scotians.

"The Information Economy Initiative is helping Nova Scotia students to graduate IT-ready and better prepared for advanced studies and the job market," said Economic Development Minister Gordon Balser. "By providing infrastructure and creating one of the most highly trained workforces anywhere, the initiative is ultimately designed to grow Nova Scotia's knowledge economy."

"Nova Scotia's young people need to develop their IT skills early. This initiative is putting more than 6,000 computers and Internet access in schools across the province to encourage young people to embrace technology and prepare for the future," said senator Jane Cordy on behalf of George Baker, Secretary of State for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA).

School boards have been key partners in the schools component, setting up individual delivery systems to install equipment and train teachers. Many have taken advantage of the Acadia Institute for Teaching and Technology, another of the initiative's components that ensures teachers have quality training on

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integrating technology into their classrooms. Thousands of teachers have already been trained at the institute, through their school boards and the Department of Education and online.

"The end result is that the Information Economy Initiative is providing teachers with more resources and professional development opportunities, which creates a better learning environment for our students," said David Reid, superintendent of the Halifax Regional School Board. "The enthusiasm of our teachers is matched only by our students' passion for learning. Everyone benefits."

Partners in the Information Economy Initiative are ACOA and Nova Scotia Economic Development (through the Canada/Nova Scotia COOPERATION Agreement on Economic Diversification), Nova Scotia Department of Education, Industry Canada, Human Resources Development Canada, Nova Scotia Council on Higher Education, Nova Scotia Technology and Science Secretariat, University College of Cape Breton, Acadia, Dalhousie, St. Francis Xavier universities, the private sector, school boards and communities across the province.

FOR BROADCAST USE:

Nova Scotia students across the province are now connected to each other and to the world through the Internet.

The provincial and federal Information Economy Initiative has invested over 38-million dollars in 62-hundred computers, Internet access and software.

The final pieces of equipment were installed in June. The project involved 181 junior and senior high schools across the province.

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